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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5351  
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY PRIORITY 7706  
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 1811  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 1029  
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 2334  
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY 2230  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 6577  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0360  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 1699

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TASHKENT 000512

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN AND DRL

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GM](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TIGHTENS CONTROL OF JOURNALISTS -  
DEUTSCHE WELLE REPORTERS DENIED ACCREDITATION

REF: A. A) 05 TASHKENT 1631

[1](#)B. B) 05 TASHKENT 3036

[1](#)C. C) 05 TASHKENT 1612

[1](#)D. D) 05 TASHKENT 3305

Classified By: AMB. JON R. PURNELL, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: A Cabinet of Ministers resolution passed on February 24 and released March 7 restricts working conditions for independent journalists and accreditation procedures for foreign journalists. Under the resolution, it is illegal for Uzbek citizens to work for non-MFA accredited foreign media outlets. It also prohibits foreign correspondents from working without accreditation. The MFA can deny accreditation for a wide variety of reasons. The resolution's first victim is Deutsche Welle. Deutsche Welle stringer Natalia Bushuyeva told Poloff that the MFA has revoked the accreditation of Deutsche Welle journalist Obid Shabanov and issued warnings to two others not to work without accreditation. The resolution is another GOU attempt to stifle independent media, and is consistent with the post-Andijon media crackdown. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) On February 24, the Cabinet of Ministers passed a resolution further restricting working conditions for the few remaining independent journalists left in Uzbekistan. The resolution, released on March 7, makes it illegal for Uzbek citizens to work for non-MFA accredited foreign media outlets, and strictly forbids technical staff from engaging in journalistic activity.<sup>8</sup> It provides that accredited journalists will have freedom of movement, except for closed areas and those requiring special permission to visit.

[1](#)3. (C) Under the resolution, foreign correspondents must disclose their incomes and apply to the MFA for accreditation. The MFA then has two months to make a decision. (Comment: The MFA's decision-making role could facilitate National Security Service (NSS) involvement in the process due to NSS influence in that Ministry. End comment.) The resolution provides a wide array of grounds for denying accreditation to foreign journalists, including calling for the overthrow of the constitutional order, violating the republic's territorial integrity, inciting violence, national, racial, or religious hostility, intervening in the country's internal affairs, humiliating the honor and dignity of citizens, intervening in their private lives, and committing "any other actions" punishable by law.

Furthermore, the MFA may reject accreditation requests on the basis of Uzbek laws, without specifying the precise reason for rejection.

14. (C) The resolution also gives the MFA power to annul existing accreditations, cancel entry visas, and deport journalists. The resolution appears to have already claimed victims. Deutsche Welle stringer Natalia Bushuyeva told poloff that the MFA revoked the accreditation of Deutsche Welle journalist Obid Shabanov on March 15, and issued warnings to stringers Solih Yahyoyev and Yuriy Chernogayev that unaccredited journalists are forbidden from working. Bushuyeva also told poloff that stringer Sayora Ruzakulova and herself, who are not accredited, are not allowed to work under the terms of the new resolution. German Embassy Press and Political Attache Raban Richter Richter confirmed the revocation of Shabanov,s accreditation.

15. (C) Japanese Political Chief Kiyomi Miyagawa told poloff that the resolution could make it harder for Japanese journalists to cover the country. Specifically, he expressed fear that Japanese correspondents based in Moscow will now find it more difficult to enter Uzbekistan. Miyagawa said that the resolution's provision allowing up to two weeks for visa adjudication could make it harder for Japanese journalists to accompany visiting government delegations. The Japanese Embassy has sent a diplomatic note to the MFA seeking clarification about certain provisions of the resolution.

16. (C) Comment: This resolution is reminiscent of the Soviet era. The attack on Deutsche Welle is a natural continuation of the GOU,s policy to crack down on independent media. The BBC World Service (ref B) and Institute for War and Peace Reporting (ref C) both closed their offices last year

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following pressure from the GOU. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty was denied accreditation in December (ref D). Other than Russian, Turkish, and Iranian correspondents, there do not appear to be any permanently based foreign journalists in the country. Foreign outlets and wire agencies are largely staffed by local stringers. BBC World Service correspondent Monica Whitlock was expelled in summer 2005 (Ref A).  
PURNELL